

occur in which the noteworthy person is not sure whether he ought to be proud or ashamed of that for which he is distinguished. When a society gives titles, decorations, and rewards for acts, it stimulates what it rewards and causes new cases of it. The operation of selection is direct and rational. The cases in which the application of distinction is irrational show most clearly its selective effect. School-teachers are familiar with the fact that children will imitate a peculiarity of one which marks him out from all the rest, even if it is a deformity or defect. Why then wonder that barbarian mothers try to deform their babies towards an adopted type of bodily perfection which is not rationally preferable ? A lady of my acquaintance showed me one of her dolls which had wire attachments on its legs in imitation of those worn by children for "orthopedic effect. She explained that when she was a child, another child who had soft bones or weak ankles, and who wore irons for them, was brought into her group of playmates. They all admired and envied her, and all wished that they had weak bones so that they could wear irons. This lady made wire attachments for her doll that it might reach the highest standard.

183. Aristocracies. All aristocracies are groups of those who are distinguished, at the time, for the possession of those things which are admired or approved, and which give superiority in the struggle for existence or in social power. In the higher civilization, until modern times, the possession of land was the only social power which would raise a man above sordid cares and enable him to plan his life as he chose. By talent an income could be won which would give the same advantage, but not

with the same security of permanence and independence. The fields for talent were war, civil administration, and religion, the last including all mental activity. Men of talent had to win their place by craft and charlatanism (sorcery, astrology, therapeutics). Their position never was independent, except in church establishments. They had to win recognition from warriors and landowners, and they became comrades and allies of the latter. Merchants and bankers were the aristocracy at Carthage, Venice, Florence, and Genoa, and in the Hansa.